Stories

by DollopheadedMerlin

Summary: Set in the universe of Scars and Souls - A series of short
stories revolving around Merlin's time waiting for Arthur to
return.

1. Ruins

Marveling at every detail, from the way the floors were worn and
cracked to the fine stitched tapestries bearing noble symbols, Merlin
walked the ancient halls of his old home. He smiled at the way the
stones glowed from the golden light of sunrise that shone through the
patterned, glass windows.

Mindlessly he roamed, his feet carrying him up the familiar stone
steps, echoes of dear faces passing him by.

He stopped abruptly, turning to the large, wooden doors beside him.
With a wistful sigh, he threw them open and strode inside, humming as
he approached the windows.

Tugging the curtains wide, Merlin cheered, "Arthur, it's a new day-"
He stopped, eyes going wide at the sight before him, a ruined,
desolate land, far different from the Camelot he knew. He spun on his
heels only to find that the room had vanished, the disastrous
landscape stretching on in all directions. He panicked, cold sweat
trickling down his back as his breath hiccuped. With a start, he
looked down, finding his old, tattered boots stepping on thin
air.

His magic failed him then and he plummeted down the height of the
once glorious castle as he wailed in remorse.

He crumpled as he hit the ground, a mess of blood and broken bones.
Sobbing, he tried to sit up, looking about at his life's grave,
marked by the rubble that was left behind. His cries turned into
sputtering breaths as his strength left him, struggling to stay alive

because he did not want to feel the emptiness of death again.

A startlingly familiar voice blended into his thoughts as they swam inside his head. Shushing him affectionately, it said, "_Just lie back, Merlin. Please. I know it's hard to remember. Just . . . close your eyes. Let your mind and body heal. You will feel better when you wake."_

Letting out one, final sigh, Merlin let his senses slip away and, as his world turned black, he could only hope that his king spoke the truth.

2. Woman

With tousled, knotted hair and flushed, red cheeks, Merlin sat on a stool in a small cottage, looking every bit the innocent child.

A woman, tall and slim, with a head of bright, yellow hair, stood in the doorway, talking in hushed voices with the local medicine man. Merlin peered around her shoulder to get a look at him. He was wearing pendants bearing numerous religious symbols and wore long black robes. Merlin frowned, thinking he might be a priest. In recent times, Christian men often mistook good magic for the work of the devil. Some of the whole hearted believers reminded him a bit of Uther, what with how they pranced about town, practically singing about how menacing magic was.

The old man caught his eye and the woman followed his gaze, looking back at him with wide, brown eyes. He smiled, his large, uneven, baby teeth gleaming. He loved this woman. She had adopted Merlin upon finding him wandering the woods in the form of a child. She'd taken him in, called him son.

Her brow wrinkled in worry and it startled Merlin. Grin falling from his features, he stared back at her, watching as she turned back to the priest.

"_Oh no . . ." _breathed the voice, of whom he told his surrogate mother was his imaginary friend.

"_What?" _Merlin questioned, a chill running down his spine.

"_She knows."_

"_Knows what?"_

"_Merlin . . . Oh, how did we forget?"_

"_Arthur, what . . ."_

"_You haven't aged, Merlin. You've been with her for years and you haven't aged."_

Merlin's eyes went wide and glassy as he looked at his foster mother's back and the disgustingly passionate eyes of the priest who thought him the devil's product.

When they finished speaking, the woman thanked the priest and softly closed the door. Then, her brow still creased with a multitude of

emotions, she knelt down beside her adopted son and placed a shaking hand on his shoulder.

"Merlin," she said, her voice just above a whisper, "you are an extremely clever boy." She laughed nervously. "You're more knowledgeable than any _wiseman_, let alone other _children. _I don't ever know how to compete with you."

Merlin swallowed anxiously and looked down at his boots.

"Look at me."

Reluctantly, he obeyed and, for a moment, she looked so incredibly woeful. But then her jaw hardened with resolve and she spoke once more. "I have to go away for a while. There are . . . some _things _I must do out of town . . . but I'll be back. So, you just wait here, and It'll be over before you know it. Alright?"

Tears welled in Merlin's eyes and he wondered if she knew that he was aware of his constant youth. Numbly, he nodded before she wiped the tears from his eyes with her thumb. He wanted to believe that it was because she cared for him, but her hands still trembled and her brows were still knitted together.

Hopelessly, he watched as she packed a few things, including a cross that she gripped tightly in her hand as if afraid to let go of it, and left, with one, cautious look over he shoulder before shutting the door.

"Maybe she'll come back, as she said," Merlin rasped to the empty house.

"_No, Merlin," _Arthur replied. "_I don't think she will."_

End
file.